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ABSTRACT

The relationship between higher education and the division of labor was studied. The objective was to evaluate whether the establishment of affiliated universities has had the intended effects in terms of efficiency and equality. A main focus of "established educational research" has been the relationship between education and employment. Education has been viewed as both an investment in human capital and as a grading or filtering mechanism. Theories of selection and grading are based on the following assumptions: (1) individuals in the educational system are rated by achievement or other criteria; (2) those selected/graded for noncompulsory education differ from those who are rejected; and (3) selection/grading benefits society, since schools match personal qualities with positions requiring the qualities. If equality in society is primarily a question of equality among individuals who perform equally, educational policy becomes a question of identifying the economic, social, and cultural impediments to the manifestation of individual capacity. The system of student financial aid is based on the objective of promoting educational equality. Research on education and equality, and particularly Swedish research, is reviewed. (SW)

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CONCLUDED PROJECT

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PROJECT LEADER: Associate Professor Bengt Gesser

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this research project was to study different aspects of the relationship between higher education and the division of labour. We tested various approaches to this question. Some of them were concerned with the relocation of higher education and its possible effects on the labour market and working conditions.

Two main aspects have been treated. Firstly, several analyses focus on the relationship between the distribution of employment and the distribution of education in the parental generation and the relation of these factors in turn to the children's educational and vocational choices. Secondly, higher education was investigated, not only as a vehicle but also as a creator of various social relations. Part of this problem is concerned with efforts to propagate higher education within various regions of Sweden. In principle, this means that higher education should be capable of reaching increasing shares of the population and in this way gaining importance as a dominant factor in society. This enquiry was conducted by Eva Fasth.

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Also as part of this project, the division of labour between women and men has been considered in a study by Boel Berner of women in science and technology. Her report concentrates on data and theories which have emerged concerning the recruitment and position of women in higher technical/scientific studies and also in research and engineering.

The project has resulted in several essays and in two monographs. One of these, "Aspects of the Relocation of Higher Education", was defended by Eva Fasth as a Ph.D. thesis in sociology in 1980. The other, "Education - Equality - Division of Labour", will be published as a book by Arkivs förlag in September 1985. The Ph.D. thesis has been discussed in various connections and should therefore by now be familiar to interested readers, hence the relatively brief summary provided here. The other book has previously only been presented to a limited circle and is therefore summarised at greater length.

Aspects of the relocation of higher education

The purpose of this study was to evaluate whether the establishment of affiliated universities had had the intended effects in terms of efficiency and equality.

A scrutiny of the motives prompting the location and establishment of the affiliates showed that the economic motive predominated while the egalitarian objective could be discerned in the background. Considerations of regional and localisation policy were almost invariably conspicuous by their absence. The study of the effects of the new affiliates in terms of geographical and social equalisation between different categories revealed that the new educational units have produced a certain geographical equalisation, though not enough in relation to the official objectives. A closer study of the Växjö affiliate showed that its establishment had had only a marginal effect on the relative growth of the working-class student population, i.e. in reducing the social bias of recruitment.

A diffusion of educational opportunities can also be related to equality between the sexes and between groups with differing educational backgrounds. Viewed in the short term, the affiliates did not contribute towards sexual equality, but on the other hand they appear, relatively speaking, to have been attractive to groups lacking upper secondary school qualifications.

The organisational design of the affiliates (e.g. no research links, teaching appointments only, a relatively small number of teachers and students for each individual subject) can be taken as a sign of rationalisation, of deliberate planning to make undergraduate studies more efficient and, consequently, less expensive, partly in terms of through-put. In the longer term, a student equivalent at the affiliates probably turned out to be more expensive than at the parent university, owing to the steady decline in student intake. Efficiency in terms of through-put for individual subjects proved to be higher at the Växjö affiliate than at the University of Lund, but as regards the number of students graduating after seven terms there was no difference between the two. Even while studies were still in progress, inefficiencies occurred which can be termed rejection or diversion. Social background was one reason for this. Rejection, measured as the proportion curtailing their studies, was greater at the Växjö affiliate than at the Faculty of Humanities and Natural Sciences in Lund. This makes it doubtful whether a diffusion of educational opportunities in the manner represented by the affiliates is a viable means of achieving either of the objectives of rationalisation and/or equality. Summing up, this survey and the author's interpretation of the survey findings indicate that the affiliates hardly produced the effects they were intended to.

If anything the effects were contrary to the objectives. This is partly because, probably, no form of equality can be achieved without extra expense, so that the two objectives (rationalisation and equality) appear to be essentially incompatible.

EDUCATION - EQUALITY - DIVISION OF LABOUR

In this publication I have considered various aspects of educational research, especially in relation to practical action. The report consists of a section headed "Introductory Remarks", followed by three parts, viz part I: "Choice, fate, coincidence?", part II: "Class education?" and part III: "Knowledge as power?".

I. Choice, fate, coincidence?

This part deals primarily with "established educational research", which is concerned with the relationship between higher education and society.

By established educational research I mean among other things that which is quoted and discussed in such public contexts as Government Commissions, research affiliated to national and local authorities and so on. (The OECD, for example, is an international body for Swedish research of this kind). The relationship between education and employment is one of the main problems with which this research is concerned. Conceptually, this problem can be variously structured. "Established" research has usually taken as its starting point the path of the individual through school and the initial period of employment, and has attempted to explain why this particular path was taken. At a societal level, the relationship between education and employment is formulated as a question concerning the way in which individuals are graded within the educational system and between that system and employment, and/or the part played by schools in conferring qualifications for various roles. In sociology, at least in the perspective of structural functionalism, the terms "selection" and "socialisation" have been used to describe these relations. When, during the 1960s, economists began taking a serious interest in education, the theory was launched of education as investment in human capital. The alternative economic theory of the educational system as a grading or filtering mechanism was put forward

about ten years later. I made the following assumptions about these concepts.

Sociology		Economics
Selection	corresponds to	Grading or filtering
Socialisation	corresponds to	Investment in human capital

I came to the conclusion that the conceptual correspondence only applies at a relatively basic level and only on condition that the concepts of selection and socialisation were interpreted in a manner compatible with their role in the theory of structural functionalism. I therefore asked whether the theory of structural functionalism could be regarded as the sociological alternative to neoclassical economic theory (at least in its way of looking at the societal role of education/school).

Using examples of empirical educational research with reference primarily to equality, I also tried to show that, with the perspectives described here, the social and economic structure tended to be taken for granted. The fundamental question was what happened to people undergoing a certain kind of education. The individualist perspective predominates and empirical research was therefore made to focus on the question as to which factors govern the individual person's choice of education and career or, in more up-to-date terms, how the individual person's achievement process is influenced. One problem of educational policy in this perspective has been that of divesting the process of choice and achievement of those factors which, from various angles, have been judged irrelevant. The aim is if possible to give all individuals the outward conditions to realise the intentions corresponding to their capacity, i.e. equal opportunities. This point is also justified by existing egalitarian ideologies in their various vintages.

II. Class education?

This part deals with research - primarily Swedish - into education and equality. One of the distinctive characteristics of the theoretical approaches considered in part I is their individualistic focus. The main function of the educational system, thus regarded, is selection/grading and/or socialisation/investment in human capital. This relegates the structure of the educational system, its content and its relation to the community at large to the status of secondary problems. In one essential sense these theories are concerned with the question as to why individuals achieve different positions in society and why, consequently, they receive different rewards and acquire different working patterns, consumption patterns and lifestyles. Small wonder, given this type of approach, that people seldom ask why different positions are constructed in a particular way, why different rewards have been fixed for different positions and why different positions are differently linked with the educational system. I hasten to add that these problems have not always been ignored. For example, I have discussed the structural-functionalist idea of differences in rewards presumably having the function of motivating the most suitable people to apply for the positions of most responsibility. Similarly, I have mentioned the idea, associated with the theory of human capital, of rewards in the labour market being related to individual productive capacity. But the important thing is that these assumptions have hardly ever been subjected to theoretical and empirical scrutiny, but are assumed in a sense to be axiomatic and straightforward. In this way there is no challenging the construction of society, still less its possible class character; instead the main issue concerns the fairness of the individual's placement in society in the meritocratic sense, i.e. whether everybody with similar circumstances in terms of ability, interests, etc. and putting in the same amount of effort will obtain positions with similar rewards. In this way it is questions concerning the role of education in social mobility and questions concerning equality in educational

choice that are problematised.

My thesis, then, is that the individualised approaches analysed here concerning the relationship between education and job allocation are naturally conducive to an individualised view of the problem of equality in society. The question, then, is not one of creating positions in society which can give equal working conditions and rewards. Instead the important question concerns creating equality between individuals. But if the societal division of labour, which includes superiority and subordination combined with great differences in rewards, is presumed to be devoid of problems, it follows that equality is based on individual performance. This makes equality primarily a question of equality between individuals who perform, or can be assumed to perform, equally. Educational policy then becomes a question of identifying the economic, social and cultural impediments to the manifestation of individual capacity and of trying to eliminate those impediments.

The empirical research employing these perspectives has essentially been of two kinds. Firstly, a more descriptive research tradition - often represented in official enquiries - has tried to verify empirically what is customarily called socially biased recruiting in the formal educational system (social arithmetic), and secondly, individually constructed enquiries have been used in an attempt to account for this empirical regularity. To a great extent this has been done by inquiring what factors have influenced individual choices of education and occupation. Attention has above all been made to focus on social, economic and cultural factors, at the same time as an effort has been made to measure individual aptitudes, skills and achievements. In sociology these approaches are being combined in studies of social stratification and mobility. One eminent researcher in this tradition is William H. Sewell (at one time chairman of the American Sociological Association), who at the beginning of the 1970s outlined the milestones of this tradition in the preface of

a book on the inheritance of inequality in Australia (Leonard Broom et al: "The Inheritance of Inequality", London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980). Sewell began by quoting one of the fathers of American sociology, Charles Horton Cooley, who wrote in his book, "Social Processes" (1918), that all societies are more or less divided into classes, based on differences in wealth, occupation and education which tend to be transferred from parents to children. This stratification creates and perpetuates differences of opportunity. Sewell, however, pointed out that the break-through of sociological analysis of social mobility came with Sorokin's classical work published in 1928.

As milestones in the research conducted in the tradition shaped by Sorokin, Sewell mentions the following monographs: Natalie Rogoff, "Recent Trends in Occupational Mobility" (1953), D.V. Glass, "Social Mobility in Britain" (1954), Gösta Carlsson, "Social Mobility and Class Structure" (1958), Kaare Svalastoga, "Prestige, Class and Mobility" (1959), Peter M. Blau and Otis Dudley Duncan, "American Occupational Structure" (1967) and David L. Featherman and Robert M. Hauser, "Opportunity and Change" (1978).

He stresses that the study by Blau and Duncan was the most influential of these works. Blau and Duncan formulated a theory of status attainment as a process developed during the life cycle of the individual and dependent not only on social background but also on the characteristics and experiences of the individual intervening between origin and final objective.

The theory of status attainment can be viewed in relation to the theory of structural functionalism. One of the points of departure of this research has been the assumption of a rationalising tendency in society manifested by a transition from particularism to universalism and from ascription to achievement. Underlying this theory is a conception of equality implying that equal achievement is always equally treated, irrespective of where the persons involved come from, whom they know, etc.

There have been other essential and influential works in the same tradition. These include, for example, James Coleman's great work on equal educational opportunities ("Equality of Educational Opportunity", 1966), both of Christopher Jencks' highly debated works on inequality and education ("Inequality", 1972 and "Who Gets Ahead?", 1979), Raymond Boudon's ingenious work on a similar subject ("Education, Opportunity and Social Inequality", 1974) and, finally, a Swedish work of the same high-class standard as the others, namely Torsten Husen's follow-up of a Malmö cohort born in 1930 ("Talent, Opportunity and Career", 1969).

The sociological research tradition which placed the formal educational system in a social mobility context has in Sweden been codified above all by Gösta Carlsson in his important "Social Mobility and Class Structure" (1958). The tradition to which this work can be ascribed was guided by two general points of enquiry. Firstly, it was asked whether societies differed with respect to the degree of social mobility or the degree of industrialisation and, secondly, it was asked whether different values in different societies, perhaps above all concerning equality, corresponded to different degrees of social mobility. The role of the formal educational system in this context was discussed in terms of "necessary" qualifications for the industrialisation process and as a more or less important factor in the social mobility of the individual, frequently as an accelerator of what was called the meritocratisation process, i.e. the assumption that in modern industrialised societies progressively greater importance will be attached to individual merits and less to such factors as family identity etc. In works on social stratification and social mobility, formal education is one of several dimensions, even though it is usually assumed that this dimension becomes more important in connection with the industrialisation process.

Gösta Carlsson devotes a chapter to the formal educational system as a factor of social mobility. In this chapter he analyses many of the points of enquiry raised during the 1960s both in research

and in the debate on education and educational policy in Sweden.

This part also deals with the research done on behalf of the 1968 Education Commission, especially in relation to C. Arnold Anderson's discussion of the same. Next I dealt with the research done in Sweden during the 1980s, above all in order to shed light on the system of financial benefits for students.

Attention was made to focus on this system at the beginning of the 1980s, partly due perhaps to the economic crisis. Both the costs and the effects of this system attracted interest, and a number of surveys were inaugurated. Of these I have concentrated above all on the studies headed by Kjell Härnqvist and Allan Svensson at the Department of Education in Göteborg. One of the main findings was that the system of student finance had implied a growth of educational equality. There are arguments to contradict this conclusion. Another survey using a different method produced different results.

In a Ph.D. thesis on economic history presented in May 1984, Anders Nilsson found that the new system of student finance introduced in 1964 ("Study Financing and Social Recruitment for Higher Education, 1920-1976", Lund 1984)

> "did not operate as a recruitment instrument, especially where students from working-class families were concerned".

Elsewhere he shows that the system appears to have favoured quite comfortably situated groups or, as he himself puts it:

> "On the other hand, relatively speaking, the system favours students from families with relatively high incomes."

This conclusion tallies quite well with my own comparison between the old system of benefits in kind and the more recent system of student finance; see the table below.

	Scholarships in kind		Financial benefits	
Social class	Support from home	Support from the community	Support from home	Support from the community
I	Support	No support	Support	Support
II	Occasional support	Occasional support	Occasional support	Support
III	No support	Support	No support	Support

The economic support provided through the system of benefits in kind was governed by the student's own assets and parental income and also by the educational aptitudes of the applicants (measured in terms of their average marks for matriculation or its equivalent). To begin with, a comparatively high average award was needed to qualify for economic support, especially in kind, but this threshold was gradually lowered to the point where the economic assessment of needs became the most important qualifying factor. This system was criticised partly on the grounds that it was unfair for those not receiving economic support to be entirely dependent on their parents. This and other criticisms led to the introduction of the system of student benefits currently in force. Under this system, students receive financial assistance regardless of family income.

The introduction of scholarships in kind can be said to have rested on the principle that differences in the economic resources of students should be eliminated by drawing on public funds. It would seem that the principle implied by the system of student finance can be expressed as follows: making it easier for all students, regardless of parental income, to obtain a university or college education.

Probably the earlier system really did have an equalising effect. The new system of financial benefits for students may have many

advantages, but - theoretically, at all events - hardly in the egalitarian sense. This must be especially true in times of economic stagnation, when the system is virtually reduced to (repayable) loans at a rate of interest not far short of the normal lending rate. My conclusion is that the aim of augmenting higher education opportunities for economically, socially and culturally underprivileged groups would have been far more successfully achieved if efforts had been made to focus on this very problem in the favourable conditions of the 1960s.

At the risk of exaggerating, I would say that in politics, and perhaps above all in research concerning education and equality, the latter seems to mean giving "Nature" a free hand. Financial benefits for students, accordingly, have been designed to eliminate economic obstacles to that freedom.

III. Knowledge as power?

The hypothesis of selection/grading differs from that of socialisation/investment in human capital in the sense that the latter could be regarded as an institutionalised ideology of education.

This means that the educational system is constructed as if it produced the socialisation or investment effects intended, viz

1. Education confers qualifications.

2. Post-compulsory education creates qualifications making the persons thus qualified suitable to hold certain particular positions in the labour market.

3. Society benefits from an increase in the number of persons educated.

Theories of selection and grading are united by the following:

1. In the educational system, individuals are ranked according to some characteristic or achievement.

2. Those who are selected/graded for non-compulsory education are presumed to have different qualities from those who are rejected. These different qualities are presumed to make them suitable for important positions in society.

3. This selection/grading is presumed to benefit society, since the educational system matches personal qualities with positions where those qualities are required.

In analysis of the selection/grading which takes place within the educational system and from that system to various positions in employment and public life, interest is made to focus above all on the selected/graded individuals. The same goes for approaches whereby the effects of selection/grading are plotted at societal level, i.e. an investigation is made of possible contributions to society as made through the individuals selected/graded.

Similarly, the effects of education are analysed in terms of socialisation theory and human capital theory. Using these approaches, hypotheses are put forward concerning the socialising effects or investment effects of education on the very individuals who are receiving it and then, possibly, on the way in which these effects are transformed into societal effects.

This narrowly individualised perspective is probably due both to the absence of a pedagogical theory of what goes on in the educational system and to the absence of a theory concerning the societal effects of education or its relationship to job allocation in the community. I have already touched on the first of these points. The second is in one sense fundamental, but is also connected to the first. Historically speaking, the

non-compulsory educational system might perhaps be described as the story of how different social practices linked to the social division of labour acquire "intellectual" content through a codification of the cognitive content belonging to different practices. One of the essential consequences of codifying a certain corpus of knowledge within the formal educational system is that decisions made and actions taken in a field linked to this knowledge have to pay deference to it in order to be considered "reasonable". This is especially true if the knowledge is presumed to be scientifically founded or to form part of a scientific subject.

In the analytical approaches, the social and economic structure is taken as given. Problems, then, are defined as concerning what the educational system does with the individuals passing through a certain kind of education. In this way the relationship between education and employment becomes a question of the relationship between different people's education and their roles in working life. But the formal educational system also has more direct effects on the social and economic structure of a society. Firstly, education defines knowledge, attitudes and values which are presumed relevant to rational decision-making. Secondly, formal education contributes to the creation of new roles in society. Training as a social worker, therefore, comprises, firstly, the learning of what are presumed to be knowledge, attitudes and values relevant to social work and, secondly, the role of social worker presupposes the role of client. It ought therefore to be possible to regard the expansion of the non-compulsory educational system as part of a redefinition of knowledge, attitudes, values and social roles in a society.

The report ends with a discussion of professions and the topical question of whether intellectuals constitute a class, or at least a class in the making. The discussion begins with a quotation from Dostoevsky which I think is also a good way of rounding off this summary:

"But Mr Lebesiatnikov, who keeps up with new ideas, declared the other day that in this day and age compassion is actually prohibited by science, and such is already the case in England, where they have political economy."

Bengt Gesser

13th June 1985

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